



For Immediate Release

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**CHECK OFF THE ELDERCARE TRUST FUND  
ON YOUR SOUTH CAROLINA STATE TAX RETURN**

Tax time is fast approaching, and that means South Carolina residents can contribute once again to the ElderCare Trust Fund.

Created by the Legislature in 1992, the ElderCare Trust Fund is run by the Lieutenant Governor's Office on Aging. The voluntary program allows people to donate money to be used to award grants to nonprofit agencies for programs designed to help the elderly live with dignity. They can contribute simply by checking off a box on their tax form.

Some 25 grants totaling more than \$300,000 have been awarded since the fund's inception, according to Frances Brannon from the Office on Aging.

Seniors across the state have been helped in a variety of ways through the programs.

In the rural community of Olanta, homebound seniors have warm meals delivered to them through a \$7,200 grant awarded to the Senior Citizens Association in Florence County.

Too often, aid is focused only on larger cities, said director Linda Mitchell Johnson. "We tend not to reach some of our rural communities," she said.

But Johnson's program reaches those seniors in need – those who are homebound, frail, ill or simply can't prepare meals for themselves. An employee delivers a hot, nutritious meal to about 20 seniors in the small community outside Florence.

The Hopewell Senior Day Care Center in Salters was awarded \$12,000 for its One Step Rural Initiative Program. The program aims to help seniors most in need by providing them with appliances and some home repairs, said director Dottie Evans. It also helps with other special needs, such as transportation, health monitoring and providing nutritional meals, she said.

Many elderly residents in this rural area have very limited incomes, Evans said.

Roland Kerson, 55, of Hemingway, received a new stove through the program. After his stove went out, he was left with no means of cooking for himself.

"It means a lot," he said. "I was without a stove. If it wasn't for this, I wouldn't have had nothing."

In addition to contributions received from the check-off on state taxes, contributions also can be sent directly to: Lieutenant Governor's Office on Aging - ElderCare Trust Fund, 1301 Gervais Street, Columbia, SC 29201.

For more information, contact the Lieutenant Governor's Office on Aging at (803) 734-9900.

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